

# 10 Messaging Types for Mudslide Preparedness

Communities reeling from the devastation of the fires that swept through California have a new threat ahead of them; mudslides.

Emergency managers and public information officers must shift from emergency response and recovery to planning, prevention, and public education for what could be a compounding disaster. Consider the following types of messages to make sure residents are informed and prepared.

**EVERY YEAR, LANDSLIDES IN THE U.S. CAUSE ROUGHLY \$3.5 BILLION IN DAMAGE AND KILL BETWEEN 25 AND 50 PEOPLE.**

**1 General Mudslide Awareness**  
Provide residents with basic information of mudslide risk, along with warning signs to watch for such as unusual sounds (trees cracking or boulders knocking together), collapsed pavement, mud, fallen rocks, etc.

**2 Weather Warnings**  
As wet weather approaches, warn residents of the storm and their potential to trigger mudslides.

**3 Public Safety Activity**  
Communicate steps local officials and communities are taking to prepare for mudslides (ie k-rails, reinforcements, etc.); don't allow the public to mistakenly think proactive measures aren't being taken.

**4 Personal Safety Measures**  
Recommend the creation of "go-bags" with resources for the 6 P's of Evacuation (People/Pets, Papers/Important Documents, Prescriptions, Pictures, Personal Computers, and Plastic (credit cards/cash).

**5 Home Protection Strategies**  
Provide steps residents can take to protect their homes and prevent further damage such as obtaining sandbags and learning how to use them, learning how to shut-off utilities, and having additional supplies on hand such as plastic sheeting, plywood, and tarps.

**6 Evacuation Planning and Challenges**  
Pre-identify and communicate resident evacuation challenges and resources.

**7 Evacuation Orders**  
Be sure that if evacuation does become necessary, your templates are updated and ready to be launched quickly.

**8 Verifying Home Coverage**  
Remind residents to check that their insurance coverage is adequate for their home's current value and policies are up to date.

**9 Combating "Fake News"**  
Disasters can be a breeding ground for rumors; inform residents of verified sources, who to believe and follow, and when to heed evacuation warnings from emergency officials.

**10 Test Messages**  
Consider doing a 2-way "test" notification to ensure everyone who wants to receive information gets it.

# Messages are only effective if they are successfully sent and received during an emergency.

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